

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TANANA 00115 191435Z
ACTION NASA-02

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R 191421Z JAN 77
FM AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8782

C O N F I D E N T I A L TANANARIVE 0115

E.O. 11652:GDS
TAGS: TSPA, MA, US
SUBJECT: NASA STATION ISSUE

REF: STATE 009120

1. SOLOFOSON RETURNED ONLY LATE JAN 18 FROM TAMATAVE WHERE
HE AND PRESIDENT RATSIRAKA HAD PROLONGED THEIR STAY.

2. WHEN I SAW HIM JAN 19, SOLOFOSON REACTED TO DEMARCHE MADE
PER REFTTEL BY STATING THAT THE DOUBTED GDRM COULD
AUTHORIZE VISIT NASA TEAM UNTIL OVERALL AGREEMENT IS REACHED,
EVEN IF AGREEMENT REACHED ONLY IN PRINCIPLE
WITHOUT FORMAL SIGNING. FROM QUESTIONING
SOLOFOSON IT IS CLEAR THAT SUPREMEN REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL
(CSR) WOULD HAVE TO AUTHORIZE NASA TEAM'S VISIT AND THAT
THERE ARE ELEMENTS WITHIN CSR WHICH (A) WOULD NOT AGREE TO
AUTHORIZE VISIT BEFORE AGREEMENT REACHED AND (B) WOULD
PROBABLY EVEN BE OPPOSED TO OVERALL AGREEMENT ON BASIS OF
SOLOFOSON'S LATEST PROPOSAL. THESE ANTI-US ELEMENTS ARE
PREPARED TO THWART ENTIRE RECONCILIATION. SOLOFOSON ADDED
THAT HE HOPED USG WOULD UNDERSTAND THAT IT WAS NOT QUESTION
OF GDRM'S CONFIDENCE IN OUR SINCERITY, BUT SIMPLY A
MATTER OF INTERNAL GDRM POLITICS.

3. I SUGGESTED TO SOLOFOSON THAT HE SHOULD CONSIDER THE
MATTER FURTHER FOR 24 OR 48 HOURS IN ORDER TO FIND MEANS BY
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WHICH NASA TEAM COULD COME, SUCH AS UNDER THE GUISE OF ONE
OF OUR PERIODIC VISITS TO NASA STATION TO RECOVER PERSONAL
ITEMS. HE RELUCTANTLY AGREED TO DO SO, AND THEN SUGGESTED
THAT PERHAPS USG COULD CONFIRM ORALLY THAT IT IS PREPARED
TO ACCEPT HIS LATEST PROPOSAL. ON THAT BASIS, HE ADDED,
HE MIGHT BE ABLE TO OBTAIN AUTHORIZATION FOR NASA TEAM'S
VISIT.

4. COMMENT: SOLOFOSON ACKNOWLEDGED THAT NASA TEAM'S VISIT TO STATION WOULD BE ONLY TECHNICAL IN CHARACTER. HOWEVER, HE OBVIOUSLY FEELS THAT RATSIRAKA IS UNDER CONSIDERABLE PRESSURE FROM ANTI-US ELEMENTS IN CSR BUT WOULD LIKE TO EXPEDITE AGREEMENT OVER DISPOSITION OF NASA STATION.

5. ACTION REQUESTED: DEPARTMENT'S INSTRUCTIONS APPEAR TO PRECLUDE OUR CONFIRMING TO SOLOFOSON THAT WE ARE READY TO SETTLE ON GDRM'S LATEST TERMS. NONETHELESS, I URGE DEPARTMENT AND NASA TO ATTEMPT TO DEVELOP LANGUAGE WHICH MAY BE SUFFICIENT TO ASSURE SOLOFOSON AND CSR THAT WE ARE PREPARED TO REACH AGREEMENT AT THIS TIME.SHEINBAUM

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